

of WIC, nutrition requirements guide the program toward better health, and Medicaid savings, while avoiding the potential confusion associated with creating a complex web of 50 different state rules. Our children's health is not defined by state boundaries. Our nutritional standards should not be either.

As we come to grip with the changes voters demanded three months ago, we must find ways to more effectively achieve national policy goals with fewer dollars. WIC has been a real success story, and it should be used as a model and not lost, in the block grant debate.

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 28, 1995]

CHEWING ON A POOR IMAGE

(By Mary McGrory)

Can Republicans blush? Now is the time if they can.

White House Chief of Staff Leon E. Panetta believes it is possible and is embarked on a campaign to shame them for their moves against the poor in the string of slash-and-burn votes that made them look—as one of them said on background—“more like the party of Herbert Hoover than Abraham Lincoln.”

Panetta is taking the cuts personally. He worked on many of the nutrition programs himself during his 17 years in the House. He worked with many Republicans who voted to dump them and replace them with block grants to states.

“I wake up in the night and I say they can't be doing this in the '90s. These are programs they have never criticized. Why are they messing with programs that work? This is worse than Reagan trying to call catsup a vegetable. They're saying catsup is a meal, they're trying to get rid of the whole meal.”

Republicans protest that they have been misunderstood and misrepresented by the Democrats. They admit they have a perception problem, but say that just because a Republican-led House Appropriations subcommittee voted to repeal the school lunch program and transferred money to the states to feed children doesn't mean they don't care about hungry kids. And they say booting the Women, Infants and Children feeding program to the states doesn't mean heartlessness. They increased funding—which critics say can be used for other purposes at the discretion of the governors.

While they were in the grip of this revolutionary fervor, the Republicans also dumped the summer jobs program, which Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich rightly says is an insurance policy for urban peace, and have issued an eviction notice to the National Service Corps, the new program that lets young people be idealistic while earning money for college.

But the tumbrels did not roll for the Food Stamps program. Somehow, it escaped. House Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) convinced House Republican leaders that food stamps should be spared the guillotine, although the “Contract With America” had prescribed it. This was the first domestic setback for the November victors, who lost a foreign policy round two weeks ago when balky freshmen refused to finance a revival of a “Star Wars” antimissile system.

Panetta speaks dryly of the miraculous deliverance of food stamps. While it is a good sign and shows some recognition of the need for the safety net, he says that “farm organizations may have had more to do with that than concern for kids.”

Unfortunately, the school lunch program has no lobby, no PACs, no clout. But Panetta says that it isn't only liberal Democrats who will stick up for the \$11 billion program

which feeds breakfast and lunch to children who otherwise would have to try to learn Latin on empty stomachs. Panetta has sent out a call to the educational, religious and business organizations that want to convince Republicans that America did not vote to take bread out of children's mouths last November.

Panetta does not want to wait for the expected Senate reversal of the House rampage. He thinks it has to be stopped now, before the full House votes. The conventional wisdom is that if the House is “Hellzapoppin,” the Senate is reason, but Panetta wants to scotch right now the idea that it is okay for “a government to attack its own people.”

He wants people to remember the '80s, when President Ronald Reagan assaulted the school lunch program on the grounds that he wanted to target the truly needy, of course. “What happened,” says Panetta, is “that 1,000 school cafeterias shut down. The schools could not afford to keep them open, and 1.2 million children did not get school lunch.”

The fad of deifying governors and insisting that states can do everything better is not new. Panetta remembers from his days as a California congressman when LEAA (Law Enforcement Assistance Administration) was the rage and sheriffs used federal grants to buy hunting trucks instead of hiring new deputies.

He will try to rally his old House colleagues. He hopes they will offer a stream of corrective amendments. Sample: House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) should divert the additional \$600,000 he requested for office expenses to school lunches.

One governor entirely of the Panetta persuasion is Howard Dean of Vermont, the Democrat who is chairman of the National Governors' Association. He stormed through the Capitol, holding news conferences, calling the cuts ludicrous and a vote on them “a test of decency.”

“You cut out school lunches, you cut down their chances to learn and you increase the risk they'll end up in foster homes or prison,” says Dean, who was voted by the conservative Cato Institute as the fourth most conservative of the nation's governors.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members are recognized for 5 minutes each.

MAKE THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE MORE RESPONSIBLE

Mr. KLINK. Madam Speaker, the United States Government in all of its ineptitude is keeping an 18-month-old child from being able to live with her family. Our Government is keeping 18-month-old Heather Corbett in Poland while her family lives in Butler County, north of Pittsburgh.

The Corbetts are like many families who for one reason or another choose to adopt a child. Heather Michell Corbett was born Dominika Katarzyna Hrabia. Her birth mother was unmarried and her father Jacek Hrabia is married, but to another woman. Both parents have consented that Heather Michelle, as she is now known, would be adopted by Dennis and Cindy

Corbett of Butler, PA. In fact they gave their consent to the adoption in open court on November 8, 1993.

But to this day—after 1 year and four months have passed—Heather Michelle has not been able to travel to her new home in Butler, PA. The reason—the Immigration and Naturalization Service will not give the child a visa to travel to America. Now understand this is the same INS that cannot protect our borders, as they allow thousands of illegal aliens from coming to this country every day—many with criminal records. Yet when it comes to this young child and her family no visa can be given, no rule can be stretched, no solution can be found to allow this young family to be together.

If Heather's birth mother had abandoned her at birth, she could get a visa, but because both her birth mother and birth father cared enough to see that she got into foster care and was adopted by loving caring parents, the child and the loving caring parents are being kept apart by the INS.

This situation has caused the Corbetts tremendous stress financially and emotionally. Mrs. Corbett has spent time traveling between Butler, PA, and Poland taking care of family members at both ends.

Mr. Speaker, the building blocks of this great Nation are our families. If the family is not strong the Nation cannot be strong. Dennis and Cindy Corbett want to bring Heather Michelle home where she will be loved and will grow to be a contributing member of our society, but the Immigration and Naturalization Service says that because the child was not abandoned or deserted by the natural parents, because they specifically said the Corbetts should be the adoptive parents, Heather Michelle Corbett, age 2, cannot come to America.

Drug dealers and murderers cross our borders every day. The INS is helpless to stop them, but now they have found someone they can stop and it doesn't matter what is wrong or right, it only matters to the INS that their rules are kept by the letter in this case, no matter how innocent the people are who are being hurt.

This is no more that bureaucratic child abuse and the INS are the bullies that are perpetrating that abuse. And now, Mr. Speaker, you and others are aware and if we do not take action to make the INS more responsible we share in that abuse.

I want to share with you, Madam Speaker, a letter that I received from Heather Michelle's grandmother, and she signed this letter June 14 of 1994. We have been working very hard for a long time trying to bring this situation to some conclusion, we have tried everything that we can, and virtually we have run into a roadblock with the INS. The letter says:

June 14, 1994.

Mr. Ron Klink I am writing to you regarding Cindy and Dennis Corbett of 195 Pinetack

Road, Butler, PA. 16001, the adoptions visa of Heather Corbett. I am Cindy mother and it has been a physical and emotionally strain for me as well as the rest of the family. I am a widow and live alone so I depend on Cindy for moral support as well as financial decisions. It has also been a physical and emotional strain on Cindy living in Poland not knowing their language. It is also unfair for Heather. She has done no wrong and in being punished. It has also been a financial strain and emotional strain for Dennis being separated from Cindy. Thank you for your help and support for Cindy, and Dennis but try again.

Madam Speaker, I just say to the Members of this House when we find this kind of problem in the Federal Government, that is why more than half of this House of Representatives was elected brandnew Members since 1990, because the people of this country do not want to see our government fail these families. They do not want to see these bureaucratic rules and red tape tie up innocent people, and that is exactly what happens.

NEUTRAL COST RECOVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, the great 18th century political economist David Hume warned legislators against passing any legislation which impedes commerce and industry. Unfortunately, our current laws regarding taxation of capital, that is, the machines and equipment and facilities and buildings used by our Nation's businesses, are exactly what David Hume was talking about.

As a result, we all have lower wages, we have less efficient tools, we have fewer factories, and we have trailed our competitors around the world in productivity growth.

I am the sponsor of a vital piece of the Contract With America that will solve this problem. Estimates by economic researchers are that it will boost the growth of our gross domestic product by 25 percent, that it will create more than 2.5 million jobs, and will increase the average worker's wages by more than \$4,500 per year.

□ 2145

The name that is given to my bill is not as catchy as most. It is neutral cost recovery. This explains what the bill does from a technical tax standpoint, but from an economic effect standpoint it should be called green thunder. It is what Steven Entin, resident scholar at the Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation, called, and I quote, a win/win proposal that deserves prompt passage, end of quote.

As we work ardently on fulfilling the Contract with America, we should keep in mind that nearly three quarters of the contract's increase in economic activity, our country's gross domestic product, comes from neutral cost recovery. While it may not be as well

known as the rest of the contract, and it may not have the first blush appeal, it is crucial to our Nation's economic growth.

What is this neutral cost recovery which will do so much for economic growth? It is a change in the way we tax capital, the way we tax buildings and equipment that we work in and with. Under my bill businesses would be able to deduct the first \$25,000 of investment in machines and buildings in the first year of purchase and index the depreciation of the rest of the value for inflation. It would allow businesses to continue with a current tax treatment or to choose the neutral cost recovery method. When choosing neutral cost recovery, businesses that currently choose the 200 percent declining balance method could shift to a 150 percent declining balance in return for being able to match depreciation for tax purposes more closely with economic depreciation of the assets.

Neutral cost recovery is not arbitrary. Unlike what we have tried to do in past years, it allows all businesses to deduct the full present value of the purchase of a capital asset regardless of the years of life. Unlike current law, it would not be biased and penalize a business for buying new machinery or equipment, and it would not bias against the construction of new buildings and factories.

What does this mean to you? If you are a wage earner, it means you will have better tools to work with, better and newer buildings to work in, higher wages and greater job opportunities. If you are a small business owner, you will be able to invest in a new building or new equipment and get a deduction which effectively allows you to treat those purchases like any other business cost. If you are a decision maker in a large corporation, you will be able to expand your company and meet the foreign competition on a more equal tax footing. This happens because neutral cost recovery reduces the cost of that machinery, that equipment, those facilities, by an estimated 16 percent.

According to the National Academy of Sciences, private investment in plant and equipment in the United States has fallen to less than 10 percent of gross domestic product, and most of that goes to replace the old capital rather than equipment that embodies entirely new capabilities, the state of the art equipment. Our low rate of investment can be increased quickly through expensing and the use of neutral cost recovery.

Madam Speaker, our future and that of our children depend upon the seed corn which we are setting aside today, the quality of tools and equipment that we are buying in our investment in factories. The provision in the Contract with America that I am proud to sponsor, neutral cost recovery, will provide us and our children and grandchildren with a stronger, wealthier America.

THE STORY OF THE SUMMITVILLE MINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WALDHOLTZ). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKAGGS. Madam Speaker, when the House suspended debate on the takings bill, I had gotten about halfway through the story of the Summitville Mine in Colorado. Just to recount quickly, Madam Speaker, this was a cyanide leaching gold mine that ended up spilling the holding ponds of cyanide laced liquids downstream in the Alamosa Creek creating a monumental disaster. After Summitville Mine went bankrupt, the owners of the land that had leased it to the mining company took back over, and even though EPA was on site trying to prevent further environmental disaster from occurring, these lands owners, Aztec Minerals, Gray Eagle Mining and South Mountain Minerals, have now sued the Federal Government claiming that EPA's actions to intercede here constitute a taking.

Madam Speaker, it does not take much more than the story of Summitville to illustrate the bureaucratic, fiscal and environmental nightmare that we'd be getting if we pass the takings bill and enable this sort of idiocy to be duplicated nationwide—as it absolutely would be.

We've heard a great deal from the Republicans about how concerned they are about entitlement programs. But this bill would create the mother of all entitlements, to benefit the Nation's largest corporations whenever they're inconvenienced by environmental or public health regulations. Under this bill, the companies that own the Summitville Mine would be among hundreds of huge corporations demanding a handout from the American taxpayer.

We've heard a great deal from Republicans about the evils of Big Government. So their answer is to create an enormous new bureaucracy—to carry out the land appraisals that would be mandated every time companies complain about compliance with an environmental law—and to handle the flood of frivolous lawsuits and to write out the checks to the corporations and landowners.

We've heard a great deal from the Republicans about their desire to send power back out to the States and to the people. So they give us this bill, and create a big new national program to manage.

We've heard from the Republicans about the need for a government that works better. So their answer is to create a regulatory "gotcha," where the EPA will be reluctant to pass or enforce even the tamest of regulations, or clean up even the worst disaster, for fear of the lawsuits this legislation will encourage.

And, of course, we've heard about the need to cut spending. But now they're